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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION: TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.30

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

1. Under the terms of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.30, the General Assembly would:

(a) Welcome the comprehensive refocusing of the substantive work of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on four areas, namely, a new partnership for development, global interdependence, paths to development and sustainable development, which should serve as a guide for pursuing the new lines of work, in particular on commodities, poverty alleviation, services development, economic cooperation among developing countries, investment and financial flows, privatization, trading opportunities for developing countries, investment, transfer of technology and trade efficiency;

(b) Express its satisfaction with the action initiated by the Trade and Development Board for the implementation of the new institutional arrangements, and of the substantive orientations agreed upon by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, and welcome Trade and Development

Board decision 398 (XXXVIII) of 7 May 1992 on the follow-up to the recommendations adopted by the Conference at its eighth session; 1/

(c) Take note of the agreement by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development at its eighth session to suspend the existing Committees of the Trade and Development Board, with the exception of the Special Committee on Preferences and of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Restrictive Business Practices;

(d) Endorse the establishment and the terms of reference of the new standing committees on commodities, poverty alleviation, economic cooperation among developing countries, and developing services sectors, and of the new ad hoc working groups on investment and financial flows, trade efficiency, comparative experiences with privatization, expansion of trading opportunities for developing countries, and interrelationship between investment and technology transfer, as well as the convening of executive sessions of the Trade and Development Board aimed at strengthening its policy function;

(e) Take note of the establishment by the Trade and Development Board of an ad hoc working group to explore the issue of structural adjustment for the transition to disarmament;

(f) Welcome the streamlining and strengthening of the intergovernmental machinery of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the improvement of methods of work aimed at providing an enriched substantive and technical basis for policy discussion, negotiation and decisions, as agreed at the eighth session of the Conference;

(g) Note that the priorities assigned by the Trade and Development Board encompass new areas of work, including poverty alleviation, sustainable development, privatization, entrepreneurship, competitiveness and trade efficiency;

(h) Endorse the convening of a United Nations international symposium on trade efficiency in 1994 of one week's duration and request the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to make all the necessary arrangements for that symposium.

B. Relationship of the proposed requests to the programme of work

2. The activities described in paragraph 1 above are related to section 15 (UNCTAD) of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993, as well as to section 32 (Conference services) up to 30 June 1992 and, from 1 July 1992, to new section 41 (Administration and management) of the programme budget for the current biennium. These activities are also related to Major Programme IV,

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1/ A/47/15, vol. I, chap. II.

Programmes 13 (International trade), Programme 14 (Development finance, resource flows and external debt), and Programme 15 (Least developed, land-locked and island developing countries, and special programmes) of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997. Proposed revisions to these programmes of the medium-term plan, reflecting decisions of the eighth session of UNCTAD are before the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly in document A/47/6 (Programmes 13, 14 and 15). Under the medium-term plan, these activities are also related to Major Programme IX, Programme 39 (Conference and library services) and proposed revisions thereto in document A/47/6 (Programme 39).

C. Modifications required in the approved programme of work for 1992-1993

3. Substantive activities in the areas covered by draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.30 are programmed under section 15 (UNCTAD) of the programme budget for 1992-1993. The decisions of the eighth session of UNCTAD would require a reorientation and refocusing of the substantive work programme of UNCTAD. The Secretary-General of UNCTAD is in the process of reorganizing the UNCTAD secretariat to reflect these substantive changes. Since this reorganization is ongoing and its outcome not yet known, it is proposed that the modifications to the UNCTAD programme of work and reorganization of its secretariat be reported on in detail in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995, which will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

4. With regard to the conference servicing requirements of the restructured machinery of UNCTAD, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.30, the meetings scheduled for the standing and ad hoc intergovernmental bodies suspended by the eighth session of UNCTAD would be replaced by meetings for the proposed new intergovernmental bodies established by the eighth session of the Conference. A list of the intergovernmental bodies of UNCTAD before and after restructuring is shown in annex I to the present report.

D. Estimated requirements in 1992-1993 at full cost

5. The calendar of meetings of UNCTAD for the biennium 1992-1993 approved prior to the convening of the eighth session of UNCTAD is as set forth in annex II of the report of the Committee on Conferences (A/46/32), which was approved by the General Assembly in resolution 46/190. The draft revised calendar of meetings for UNCTAD during 1993 is contained in the annex to the report of the Committee of Conferences to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly (A/47/32). In that report the Committee on Conferences also requested the Secretariat to present to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session a statement of programme budget implications of the proposed restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD, following decisions of the Conference at its eighth session and of the Trade and Development Board (A/47/32, para. 13).

6. The venue for meetings of the Trade and Development Board and its subsidiary bodies would continue to be Geneva. In estimating requirements for the draft revised calendar for 1993, provision has been made for standing committees, ad hoc working groups, and other expert groups based on certain assumptions. The periodicity of the new standing committees will be considered at the first session of each committee. Prior to restructuring, the standing committees tended to meet on a biennial basis for seven working days, and the ad hoc working groups tended to meet annually for five days. Pending a decision on their future periodicity, it is assumed that the new standing committees and the ad hoc working groups would meet on an annual basis, with the duration of their sessions limited to five working days.

7. The estimated conference servicing requirements for the new intergovernmental structure of UNCTAD are based on the following pattern of meetings for the current biennium:

(a) Trade and Development Board: one annual session programmed in two parts, with each part requiring 10 working days and provided with six meetings per day of interpretation in the six official languages and two meetings per day in four languages;

(b) Six standing committees: one annual session for each committee, with sessions limited to five days and provided with four meetings per day of interpretation in the six official languages and two meetings per day in four languages;

(c) Nine ad hoc working groups: one annual session for each group, with sessions limited to five days and provided with two meetings per day of interpretation in the six official languages and two meetings per day in four languages;

(d) Working Party on the Medium-Term Plan and the Programme Budget: two sessions per year, each session limited to five days and provided with two meetings per day of interpretation in the six official languages and two meetings per day in four languages;

(e) Other commodity conferences and meetings: seven sessions projected for the biennium, with a duration on average of 10 working days each session, provided with four meetings per day of interpretation in the six official languages and two meetings per day in four languages;

(f) Other working parties, study groups and expert groups: a total of 150 days projected for the biennium provided with two meetings per day of interpretation in the six official languages.

8. Documentation estimates have been based on the assumption of an average provision of four pre-session and one post-session document for standing committees and two pre-session and one post-session document for ad hoc working groups. In-session documentation has been estimated at five pages per working day for standing committees and ad hoc working groups. Documentation

requirements for other working parties, commodity conferences and expert groups vary, depending on the number and complexity of the issues involved. However, efforts have been made to maintain consistency in the methodology and assumptions underlying the comparative estimates of costs of conference servicing requirements prior to and following restructuring.

9. As indicated in annex II of this report, the estimates of conference servicing costs for the UNCTAD calendar of meetings for the biennium 1992-1993 approved prior to the eighth session of UNCTAD were estimated at $23,991,700 on a theoretical full-cost basis, assuming that no part of the requirements could be met from the permanent conference servicing capacity of the Organization, and that they would all be met by temporary staff. The conference servicing costs for the draft revised calendar of UNCTAD meetings for the current biennium are estimated at $21,991,200, also on a theoretical full-cost basis.

E. Potential for absorption

10. The cost of servicing the intergovernmental bodies of UNCTAD following restructuring, amounting to $21,991,200 on a theoretical full-cost basis, would be provided from the overall conference servicing capacity of the Organization. The meetings of these bodies, which will be included in the revised calendar of conferences and meetings for 1992-1993, will be serviced from within the existing resources provided under section 32 (Conference services) up to 30 June 1992 and, from 1 July 1992, under new section 41 (Administration and management) during the current biennium. The provision requested for 1992-1993 was based on the assumption that the overall number and distribution of meetings and conferences in 1992-1993 would be consistent with the pattern of meetings for the United Nations in past years. The provision requested for temporary assistance for meetings in this connection was significantly reduced by the General Assembly when it appropriated funds for 1992-1993, and current indications are that requirements for temporary assistance for meetings in 1992 will exceed the 1992 portion of the related appropriation. In view of this, and since the estimated savings related to the change in the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD are based on assumptions of conference servicing needs, on a theoretical full-cost basis, it is proposed that any net reduction in the actual conference servicing costs resulting from the restructuring of the intergovernmental machinery of UNCTAD be reflected in the second performance report on the programme budget for 1992-1993, together with other factors affecting these requirements. This report will be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session.

F. Summary

11. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.30, no additional appropriation would be required during the biennium 1992-1993.

Annex I

INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

Intergovernmental bodies before restructuring	Intergovernmental bodies after restructuring
Standing Committees	Standing Committees
TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD	TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT BOARD
Committee on Commodities	Standing Committee on Commodities
Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries	Standing Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries
Special Committee on Preferences	Special Committee on Preferences
Committee on Invisibles and Financing related to Trade	Standing Committee on Developing Services Sectors: Fostering Competitive Services Sectors in Developing Countries
Committee on Manufactures	
Committee on Shipping	Standing Committee on Poverty Alleviation
Committee on Transfer of Technology	
Committee on Tungsten	Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Restrictive Business Practices
Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Restrictive Business Practices	
Working Parties and ad hoc groups	Working Parties and ad hoc groups
Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget	Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and the Programme Budget
Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Iron Ore	Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Iron Ore
Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT	Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Tungsten
	Joint Advisory Group on the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/GATT

Intergovernmental bodies before restructuring (continued)	Intergovernmental bodies after restructuring (continued)
Working Parties and ad hoc groups (continued)	Working Parties and ad hoc groups (continued)
Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Reverse Transfer of Technology	Ad Hoc Working Group on the Interrelationship between Investment and Technology Transfer
Working Party on International Shipping Legislation	Ad Hoc Working Group on Expansion of Trading Opportunities for Developing Countries
Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Definitions and Methodology employed in the UNCTAD Data Base on Trade Measures	Ad Hoc Working Group on Investment and Financial Flows; Non-debt-creating Finance for Development; New Mechanisms for Increasing Investment and Financial Flows
Joint UNCTAD/IMO Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Maritime Liens and Mortgages and related subjects	Ad Hoc Working Group on Trade Efficiency
Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Compensatory Financing of Export Earnings Shortfalls	Ad Hoc Working Group on Comparative Experiences with Privatization
Working Party on Diversification, Processing, Marketing and Distribution, including Transportation	Ad Hoc Working Group on Structural Adjustment for the Transition to Disarmament
Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Development, Improvement and Operation of Ports	
Other commodity conferences and meetings	Other commodity conferences and meetings
Provision for seven commodity sessions of 15 days each in the biennium	Provision for seven commodity sessions of 10 days each in the biennium
Other working parties, study groups and expert groups	Other working parties, study groups and expert groups
Provision for 150 days with 2 meetings per day in the biennium	Provision for 150 days with 2 meetings per day in the biennium

Annex II

INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

1992-1993

A. Conference-servicing requirements at full cost before restructuring

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Pre-session documentation	
6,250 pages, 250 documents (A, C, E, F, R, S)	6 985 300
Meeting servicing	
Interpretation - 1,500 meetings (A, C, E, F, R, S), 700 meetings (A, E, F, S)	10 652 500
In-session documentation	
3,250 pages, 130 documents (A, C, E, F, R, S)	3 559 800
Post-session documentation	
2,500 pages, 100 documents (A, C, E, F, R, S)	2 794 100
TOTAL	23 991 700

B. Conference-servicing requirements at full cost after restructuring

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Pre-session documentation	
6,000 pages, 240 documents (A, C, E, F, R, S)	6 705 800
Meeting servicing	
Interpretation - 1,300 meetings (A, C, E, F, R, S), 600 meetings (A, E, F, S)	9 208 100
In-session documentation	
3,125 pages, 125 documents (A, C, E, F, R, S)	3 422 900
Post-session documentation	
2,375 pages, 95 documents (A, C, E, F, R, S)	2 654 400
TOTAL	21 991 200